

ATHLETES TO THESPIANS, FOUR DARBY SENIORS JOINED THE THEATRE PROGRAM AT THE START OF THEIR JUNIOR YEAR.

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Typically when you start out your high school career as an athlete you stay an athlete, but for four Darby seniors that wasn't the case. Nate Churchill, Karsen Davidson, Gage Trolinger, and Tyler Hessenauer all joined the theater program at the start of their junior year. Before being thespians they participated in many different sports: cross country, track, swimming, wrestling, and football. They soon transitioned to thespians.

Tyler Hessenauer said he had an interest in acting and theatre was the way for him to try it out.

"I got involved in theatre because I've always had an interest in voice acting, but had struggled with how to make use of that interest," Hessenauer stated. "So junior year, I auditioned for my first show, loved it, and kept coming back."

Combined they have acted in more than 10 shows including Main Stage and X theatre performances. They have held and acted in significant roles: Gage as Mr. Fox in "Fantastic Mr. Fox," Nate as Fredrick Frankenstein in "Young Frankenstein," and Karsen as Dr. Frankenstein in "Young Frankenstein," and Tyler as William Henry Blore in "And Then There Were None". With each role, there are new challenges.

Karsen said he has put in the time to adjust and practice his character outside of regular play practice.

"For 'Young Frankenstein', I had to stay late after tech rehearsal and work super late on building extra sets the night before the in-school performance," Davidson said. "Right now I'm working on a New York accent for Kiss Me Kate and it's tough for me."

Craig Lohmann, the assistant director of Darby Theatre, says that all of them have added something unique to the program.

"All four gentlemen have done great things in Darby theatre even though they have only started up rather recently," Lohmann said. "They have each shined, and starred, in their own way, whether on the main stage, in student-directed shows, or in improv."

Each of them have learned and enjoyed different things about theatre, from the friendships to the diversity.

"Theatre has had a very positive impact on me, in terms of opening me up to new experiences, and engaging with the theatre and LGBTQ+ community in ways that I would not have been able to, had I not joined the theatre troupe," Hessenauer stated.

Nate says theatre has been a place he feels supported and is comfortable with being who he is.

"Theater has helped me learn to live my life without fear of judgement. Getting up on a stage in front of a packed house and tossing away all that fear to give the best performance has raised my confidence tremendously," Churchill said. "The directors and every thespian are always ready to help one another at the drop of a hat. They inspire me to be better."

Mr. Lohmann says they have left a legacy and example for other students to follow.

"They have surely left an impact and are examples of how students can flourish in the theatre even if they never initially intended to," Lohmann exclaimed.

Many people think that to get anywhere in a sport or club you haven't to start when you're a freshman. Sometimes that can help but high school is about exploring and starting something in the middle of high school still means you can be involved and succeed. Don't be afraid to go out and try something new.

